AILET

How to Prepare for Legal Reasoning of CLAT in 20 Days?

Aditya Anand · 03 Aug 2020

The Consortium of National Law Universities (the “Consortium”) announced certain modifications in the pattern of the Common Law Admission Test (the “CLAT”), 2020.

The UG-CLAT 2020 would focus on evaluating the comprehension and reasoning skills and abilities of candidates. Overall, it is designed to be a test of aptitude and skills that are necessary for a legal education rather than prior knowledge, though prior knowledge occasionally may be useful to respond to questions in the Current Affairs section.

The UG-CLAT 2020 shall be a 2-hour test, with 150 multiple-choice questions carrying 1 mark each. There shall be negative marking of 0.25 marks for every wrong answer.

These questions would be divided across the following 5 subjects: English Language Current Affairs, including General Knowledge, Legal Reasoning, Logical Reasoning and Quantitative Techniques. The test will be conducted online i.e. on the computer systems.

In the new pattern, the major change is in the legal reasoning section. The intention of the consortium behind it is to free the students who have just cleared 12th grade to mug up such tedious laws, as for a 12th grade student it is difficult to understand the hardcore legal principles without getting proper guidance and knowledge.

Thus the idea now is to test the comprehension and reasoning skills of the candidate.

Now, according to the new pattern the candidate shall be expected to read passages of around 450 words each. The passages may relate to fact situations or scenarios involving legal matters, public policy questions or moral philosophical enquiries.

There shall be five questions from each passage wherein the different situations shall be given and the student needs to answer them by applying the principles established in the passage.

How to solve Legal Comprehension Questions?

The 450-500 words passage will be a general passage from any judgement carrying judicial opinion or general contemporaneous law which have been in the news or any passage laying down moral principles and norms.

It is required to give a thorough reading of the passage because one needs to understand the principles laid down in the passage in order to solve the question. It is important that the candidate must be aware of the basic legal terms for example plaintiff, defendant, appellant etc to interpret the meaning of the passage.

It is expected that the passages shall revolve around criminal law, constitutional law, contract law, tort or family law or the moral principles i.e. they will contain passages relating to any of these following topics but the passage will be such that it will not require any prior knowledge of the legal principles but of course, it will be a legal passage and not an English comprehension passage.

Therefore the quest will be to correctly understand the legal principle established in the passage. Therefore it will be beneficial to brush up the basic legal terms and principles of these topics this will help in the easy and speedy understanding of the passage.

This section will be time-consuming so you need to ensure that you have sufficient time for this section, therefore the student needs to be really quick in attempting other sections because they are not that time taking and save time for this section.

Follow the given steps while solving legal reasoning questions:

1. Read the entire passage thoroughly. Focus on the facts and the conclusion
2. The questions will carry a situation different from the passage so the student needs to apply analogy and a draw an answer referring to the facts given in the passage. Suppose in an X situation Y will be the solution as per the passage then read the question carefully if it is opposite to what is given in the passage the answer shall also be the opposite.
3. If the question is on legal maxims or phrases and you do not know directly the meaning of it then, don’t panic, read the two-three sentences surrounding the maxim of the passage, you will be able to infer the meaning by applying elimination technique
4. There can be questions wherein a principle is given and a situation is asked on it. Read the principle carefully and try to understand its intention and then apply it to the situation

5. When the passage is based on moral principles, then simply apply your common sense in the given situation i.e. put yourself in the situation of the question and then judge the right course of action
6. There can be questions wherein the situation is different from the one given in the passage, in such a case try to understand the principle and the intention behind it. Then find the answer on the same lines.

Left with 20 days! The clock is ticking! Don't worry follow the given steps, legal reasoning will become a cakewalk!

- The CLAT 2020 exam shall be conducted online. It becomes a little stressful to read such long passages on the screen and then read the questions. Also, the freedom to mark the answers in the passage is lost. The key to this problem is developing a habit of reading comprehension passages and questions on the screen by solving mock tests, this will increase the speed and the question paper will remain no more like alien to you.
- Practice at least two legal comprehension passages in a day, on the computer or laptop screen and not on the paper. This will help you in developing the habit of reading passages on the screen.
- Always solve the passages by setting the timer. Try to solve one passage maximum in 8-10 minutes.
- Memorise the principle so established from the passage so that while attempting questions you do not need to unnecessarily scroll up the page
- Brush up your legal knowledge by laying hands on recent judgements and basic laws. The idea is to just have a bare knowledge of what is given there
- Learn basic keywords of law, to make your interpretation of the passage easy.
- Read legal current affairs from the news articles. There is a chance a direct passage can be picked up from.
- Try to devise a logical inference of the passage. This will help in answering the application based questions.
- When you will read the questions, read their options also very carefully, because generally there will be two options which will be quite similar, so you would have to then struggle between those two options only to devise the answer, the other two options will automatically get eliminated

- Solve at least one full-length mock test every two days, this will help you to devise the time which you can give into each section according to your skills

It is very important to keep your calm while doing the exam, you should keep in your mind that now the Legal Section has become very easy and it is quite feasible to get a perfect score, it just requires little more time and patience.

It is advisable to solve the Legal Section at the end so that you have sufficient time to apply your brain. And when left with only a minute option b and c are the saviours, but use this dupe only when you have not reached the mark of 120-125 questions out of 150 questions. Never take risk of more than 10 questions as there is a negative marking of 0.25

Legal Section will roughly comprise of 35-39 questions which makes it to 7-8 passages. Reading 7-8 passages in a row on the computer screen can exhaust your mind, thus it is advisable to read the whole passage and keep in mind the principles established therein.

Make sure you go through all the practice materials and sample papers provided by the CLAT consortium, these are closest in style and level of difficulty to what you may see in the eventual UG CLAT 2020 paper.

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